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# **Western Europe: The Decline of Eurocommunism**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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October 1985*

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# **Western Europe: The Decline of Eurocommunism**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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European Analysis. It was coordinated with the  
Directorate for Operations. Comments and queries  
are welcome and may be directed to the Chief,  
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**Western Europe:  
The Decline of Eurocommunism**

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**Key Judgments**

*Information available  
as of 4 September 1985  
was used in this report.*

Eurocommunism, the effort by West European Marxists to flourish within democratic institutions and revitalize indigenous non-Leninist Marxist tradition, has failed to bring Communists much closer to power and is in deep decline. Eurocommunism flourished in the 1970s, when East-West detente helped the image of all Communists. It has suffered in the 1980s as detente has wilted, and Soviet behavior in Afghanistan has revived the perception of Soviet threat. We believe the Eurocommunists overestimated their electoral appeal and underestimated public suspicion of their democratic credentials. In addition, many supporters found it difficult to reconcile revolutionary lore with democratic practice. Finally, when Eurocommunist leaders have achieved power at the local or national level, their tendency to engage in "politics as usual" has left rank-and-file Communists deeply disappointed. In short, Eurocommunists in office have failed to meet their followers' expectations of radical change or even marked improvement in governmental performance—a situation that has robbed these parties of much of their distinctiveness and appeal.

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As a result, West European Communist parties are rent by ideological splits while their influence over their traditional working-class constituency is declining. French and Spanish Communist electoral strengths are at historic lows, and the Italian Communists have suffered a series of recent defeats at the polls. West European Communist hardliners have gone on the offensive, attacking the Eurocommunists for abandoning revolutionary goals and demoralizing the rank and file.

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The malaise of Eurocommunism is evident in almost universal declines in membership among parties espousing the concept. Youths today are attracted to groups espousing causes such as environmentalism and feminism rather than Communism. Socialist rivals—particularly in France and Spain—have proven better able to aim their appeals at these issues and to adapt to the shift in the West European labor force toward the service sector and away from heavy industry—the traditional Marxist constituency. Membership in Communist trade unions is declining both absolutely and relative to other leftist unions.

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Communist leadership problems also contrast with socialist leaders' accomplishments. Italian Communist leader Enrico Berlinguer has died, his Spanish counterpart Santiago Carrillo has lost his power and recanted his Eurocommunist faith, and French Communist boss George Marchais has,

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in our view, become more clearly perceived as hypocritical and incompetent. By contrast, socialist leaders have proven skillful at siphoning off voters and union members from the Communists, and Socialists Felipe Gonzalez, Francois Mitterrand, and Bettino Craxi have all assumed their countries' highest political office. [REDACTED]

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The decline of Eurocommunism has accelerated PCI efforts to forge common security policies with West European socialists, and the traditional antipathy between PCI and PCF leaders is worsening in the wake of increasing French Communist support for Soviet policies. On the other hand, Italian and French Communists agree on the right of local parties to control their own destiny and are helping the Communist Party of Spain fight for survival against a pro-Soviet rival. [REDACTED]

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We believe that the decline of Eurocommunism has a mixed impact on US interests:

- On the positive side, the concept failed to provide its advocates with a way out of the political ghetto, and those parties that have grown more critical of the United States have also become less influential.
- On the other hand, Eurocommunist criticism of the Soviet Union—which in our view has more credibility among West European leftists than pronouncements by the United States or West European governments—now is less vociferous and carries less weight. [REDACTED]

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In our view, the question of their relations with Moscow pose particularly difficult questions for Eurocommunist parties because of the priority they place on winning non-Communist votes. Polls confirm that non-Communist voters have a generally negative view of the Soviet Union. Many voters were willing to give Moscow the benefit of the doubt in the 1970s but far fewer do so since the invasion of Afghanistan. The immobility of Soviet domestic politics may also have hurt recruiting efforts among younger constituents. [REDACTED]

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Nevertheless, in our view the new Soviet leadership has an opportunity to improve relations with West European Communists. We note the hopeful, if cautious, West European Communist reaction to Gorbachev's accession. Because we believe that most West Europeans have always tarred Eurocommunists with the Soviet brush, Soviet policies that gave Moscow a more benign image in Western Europe would improve somewhat the

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political health of local Communists. We think there are some signs that Moscow has decided to pay lipservice to the West European parties' independence—a key issue in particular for the PCI. [ ]

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More imaginative Soviet domestic policies—particularly those giving the impression of greater flexibility in economic matters—would also, we believe, improve Moscow's image in Western Europe as a whole and would be welcomed by Eurocommunists in particular. Even if the USSR took these actions, however, we think that the Eurocommunists would be hard pressed to enhance their political standing significantly. Such an improvement, in our view, would require a number of factors, all of them either difficult or not under the Communists' control; for example:

- A major economic setback in Western Europe, which would bring many protest votes to the Communists.
- A sophisticated Soviet propaganda offensive that convinced West Europeans as a whole that the Soviet Union was more deeply committed than Washington to arms control and disarmament.
- An end to factional squabbling within Communist party leaderships.
- Greater attention by the Communists themselves to environmental issues—a difficult shift given the tensions between environmentalism and traditional Marxist themes. [ ]

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## Western Europe: The Decline of Eurocommunism

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### Introduction

Eurocommunism, which a few years ago promised (or threatened) to bring West European Communist parties into the mainstream of political life, is in deep decline. Most of the parties that espoused it are rent by splits, electoral losses, and a decline in their influence over traditional working-class constituencies. Of the three leaders most closely associated with the concept, one—Italy's Enrico Berlinguer—is dead; another—Spain's Santiago Carrillo—has lost his power and moved sharply away from Eurocommunism; and the third—France's Georges Marchais—has pulled his party back toward orthodoxy and political isolation.

This paper will analyze the political problems posed by Eurocommunist theory, assessing the role of electoral strategy, internal fissures, and demographic trends in the hard times faced by those who espouse it. In addition, it will analyze the tarnished Soviet model and examine the premise that the new leadership in Moscow may restore some luster to independent Communism.

### Definition and Background

#### Theory

As a theoretical concept, the term "Eurocommunism" denotes the search for the correct relationship between the Soviet experience and the non-Leninist Marxist tradition of Western Europe. Ambivalence toward the Soviet model—with antipathy toward Soviet repression (particularly after Khrushchev's attacks on Stalin in 1956) struggling against residual respect for the homeland of Socialism—led West European Communists to rediscover non-Russian Marxist thinkers who predated Lenin and shared neither his distaste for democracy nor his obsession with conspiratorial politics. Italian Communist Party (PCI) leader Alessandro Natta recently echoed this

rediscovery when he said, "The Marxist workers' movement is the offspring of Western culture and civilization."

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From this reminder that Western Europe was the center of Marxist thought before the Russian Revolution, it was a short jump to the theory that developed capitalist countries need a democratic Communism attuned to the openness of Western societies. This step was taken when the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 sparked open disputes between Moscow and the West European parties.

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#### Practice

Theoretical rejection of Leninist tenets led, in the Western Europe of the 1970s, to acceptance of the democratic road as the likely path to power. Thus, while claiming allegiance to revolutionary goals, Eurocommunists renounce the classic Marxist stress on violent revolution—a trait that distinguishes them from orthodox West European parties, which contest elections but remain enamored of the barricades. In addition, Eurocommunists often criticize Soviet policies and claim the right to a national road to Socialism.

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Eurocommunist leaders retain one important organizational similarity with hardliners—they do not support democracy in their own organizations. Although they have differing attitudes toward "Democratic Centralism," they permit only limited internal dissent and—as evidenced by recent paroxysms in the Finnish and British parties—they are as willing as orthodox Communists to purge factional rivals.

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#### Ideology and Morale

We believe that two central contradictions limited the overall popularity of Eurocommunism even at its height in the 1970s, causing major—and in Spain

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*Enrico Berlinguer,  
deceased PCI leader*



*Alessandro Natta, Berlinguer's  
successor*

perhaps fatal—internal problems. First is the contradiction between the millennial ideals traditionally associated with Communism and the expedient tactics emphasized by Eurocommunists. Party militants, in our view, found it difficult to retain enthusiasm once the ups and downs of electoral politics replaced the heady atmosphere of revolutionary agitation as the standard for political progress. As a result, demoralization set in once voting patterns, demographic trends, and relations with other leftists all turned sour. [redacted]

Second, we believe that a contradiction between democratic political strategy and intolerance of internal dissent limited the popular appeal of Eurocommunism. Moderates in all parties had their public calls for internal democracy rejected by party leaders and sometimes found themselves removed from positions of power. Communist hardliners and leaders of non-Communist parties pointed out the hypocrisy of the Eurocommunists' penchant for rigging congresses and debates in traditional Leninist style. [redacted]

#### **National Differences**

Within these broad outlines, we believe that the depth and durability of each party's devotion to Eurocommunism has varied according to political tradition and domestic context. In our view, historical differences help explain why the PCI has remained Eurocommunist while the Spanish and French parties have not. [redacted]

**Tactics and History.** Italian Eurocommunism is a natural development in line with PCI history and lore. PCI loyalists lean on the pre-World War II teachings

of Antonio Gramsci, who substituted the concept of working class "hegemony" for the more authoritarian "dictatorship of the proletariat." Gramsci's concept meant that workers could rule in cooperation with other progressive elements of society. Palmiro Togliatti, the post-war PCI leader, built on this tradition, underscoring his party's independence from Soviet policy, and convinced many Italians that the PCI was a bona fide democratic party. The majority of PCI leaders continue to seek power through democratic means and stress their independence of Moscow [redacted]

On the other hand, we believe that the French Communist Party (PCF), which has no rich theoretical tradition, has lacked leaders either devoted to democracy or independent of Moscow. The PCF has flip-flopped in its policies, most notably perhaps in the period before World War II, when it moved from an anti-Nazi "Popular Front" strategy, to support for the Hitler-Stalin Pact (and opposition to the war effort in 1939-40), and back to an anti-Nazi position when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. We believe that for leaders of such a party Eurocommunism was just another tactic, albeit one that caused some headaches in Moscow. In our view, Marchais and company jettisoned Eurocommunism once they determined that it would neither keep the PCF stronger than its Socialist rivals nor provide it with international prestige. [redacted]

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The Spanish experience lies somewhere in the middle. While Spanish Communist Party (PCE) leaders, in our view, are proud of their record of struggle during the Spanish Civil War, they never developed a political or theoretical tradition independent of Moscow. We believe party leaders calculated that an image of independence, coupled with the prestige acquired through their Civil War experience, would serve them well in a democratic system. In our judgment, they embraced a Eurocommunist position after 1968—and particularly after Franco's death—largely because they thought it would bring them votes. The Spanish party retains its Eurocommunist orientation, but its leaders have little time to ponder doctrinal complexities in the wake of electoral disasters and the emergence of a hardline, Soviet-supported rival. [ ]

**Disappointed Expectations.** Rank-and-file disillusionment grew out of the leaders' failure to exploit successes at the polls or their resulting access to power. For years, party strategists and the leftist media had raised the hopes of supporters that Communists in local office and national cabinets would be the engines of radical social change or at least a marked improvement in governmental performance. Instead, Communist politicians were frequently drawn into the sort of standard political maneuvering that had long inspired voter cynicism in countries such as France and Italy. As a result, Eurocommunist participation in democratic institutions tended to blur the distinction between Communist and non-Communist political tactics. [ ]

PCI leaders, who came to share power in many important Italian cities—including Rome—proved as unable as other politicians to solve the chronic inefficiencies and inequities of Italian urban life. Their followers expressed to pollsters and journalists disappointment that Communist officeholders seemed satisfied to conduct "politics as usual." [ ]

French Communists shared national power between 1981 and 1984. But their experience in government left them with a share of the blame for the Mitterrand administration's economic errors and policy failures. Georges Marchais' decision to break with the government compounded PCF problems; polls showed that 80 percent of party supporters opposed leaving government. Forty-six percent of Communist respondents to a poll taken last February believed that their party was in "irreversible decline." [ ]

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### **Electoral Roads**

*Communist parties entering electoral politics in Western Europe have chosen among four strategies:*

- *Participate in parliament solely as a tactic in a struggle to force revolutionary change.*
- *Participate in government and respect democratic institutions.*
- *Maintain a parliamentary delegation and support the government without joining it.*
- *Form a parliamentary opposition to the government and respect democratic institutions.* [ ]

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*Excluding the immediate postwar period, the Portuguese Communist Party has been the only West European Communist party to adopt the first road. This hardline, pro-Soviet party made no pretense of respecting democracy in the chaotic period following the ouster of the Caetano dictatorship in 1974. Its efforts to seize power were thwarted due to opposition from General Eanes, currently Portugal's President, and the Portuguese Socialists led by Mario Soares, the outgoing Prime Minister, with support from the US and West Germany.* [ ]

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*French, Finnish, and Cypriot Communists have at various times contributed ministers to their governments, showing no signs of attempting to undermine the system. As a result, these parties shared credit for government successes and blame for failures. In Finland, the Communists were in the government from 1966 to 1982. French Communists failed during their tenure in government (1981-84) either to convince the public of their independence from Moscow or to avoid sharing the blame for economic problems.* [ ]

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*Italian Communists took the third road between 1976 and 1979, supporting Christian Democratic-led governments in the hope of eventually joining a ruling coalition. This did not occur and the PCI now has shifted to opposition. The party leadership drew sharp rank-and-file criticism for failing to gain a direct governing role during this period, and the PCI would probably seek firmer assurances from its potential coalition partners before trying this strategy again.* [ ]

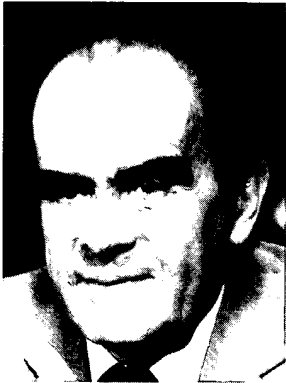
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*Georges Marchais, French Communist leader*

Spanish Communists have even worse leadership problems; Santiago Carrillo, Secretary-General from 1964-82, is engaged in what we view as a suicidal struggle against Gerardo Iglesias, his handpicked successor. Carrillo has virtually destroyed the internal unity of a party once proud of its cohesion and anti-fascist traditions. Once the most vocal Eurocommunist, Carrillo now supports Soviet security policies and even flirts with the PCE's pro-Soviet rival. [REDACTED]

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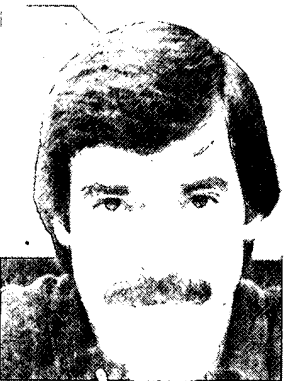


*Santiago Carrillo, former PCE leader*

### Measuring the Decline

The Eurocommunists, by driving for power in a democratic arena, enabled supporters and opponents alike to measure their progress by traditional democratic—rather than revolutionary—indicators. While these parties achieved some degree of popularity in the 1970s, their vote totals never reached levels high enough to permit a challenge for political power. We believe that West European Communist leaders overestimated the electoral appeal of Eurocommunism and underestimated public suspicion that Communist parties, whatever their stripe, really did not support democracy. In our judgment, as failures multiplied and membership drives fizzled, more and more people inside and outside the parties came to see Eurocommunism as a seriously flawed concept. The Eurocommunist parties failed even to hold their position among their traditional working-class constituency—the backbone of any Communist party that relies on popular appeal rather than revolutionary fervor. Failure, in our view, led rank-and-file party members to question whether their leaders could ever reconcile the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist tradition with Eurocommunism's democratic practice—a loss of confidence that no party so far seems able to ameliorate.

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*Gerardo Iglesias, PCE secretary general*

We believe that Marchais, by bungling his chance for power and by carrying out a halfhearted purge of reformers at the February PCF congress, has earned a reputation for incompetence and hypocrisy. His level of support among party followers—as measured in polls—plummeted from 71 percent to 44 percent between June and October 1984. [REDACTED]

### Losing Votes

Eurocommunist proponents are reeling in the wake of setbacks that have tumbled PCF and PCE popularity to historic lows and created doubts among Italian press commentators over the PCI's political prospects.

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**Table 1**  
**Electoral Performance in**  
**Legislative Elections**

Percent

	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983
PCI	26.9	27.1	34.0	30.3	29.3
	1968	1973	1978	1981	
PCF	20.0	21.4	20.6	16.7	
	1977	1979	1982		
PCE	9.2	10.6	3.8		

Internal French Communist Party polls currently place party support at 10 to 11 percent—less than half the party's customary postwar total. Spanish polls suggest that the Spanish Communist Party would fare as poorly as in 1982, when it polled only 3.8 percent of the vote. The PCI's decline from its 1976 peak has been less traumatic because the drop itself has been less steep and because its Christian Democratic rivals have stagnated as well. [REDACTED]

West European Communist hardliners, such as the PCI's Armando Cossutta, have publicly attacked the obsession with elections as the Eurocommunists' Achilles' heel. We find persuasive their argument that the Eurocommunists fight on terrain chosen by the enemy, demoralizing the rank and file by forgetting their differences with other parties. We believe that the French and Spanish Communist leaders who have readopted hardline positions in the wake of electoral defeat agree with this analysis. [REDACTED]

#### **Losing Members**

Eurocommunist parties, because they mobilized support using traditional democratic means, depended on mass membership drives to underpin their political strategies. They renounced Lenin's preference for small revolutionary parties in favor of large organizations capable of broad public appeal. Thus, we believe, declining party membership—an expressed concern of party leaders—is a major indicator of decline. [REDACTED]

**Table 2**  
**PCI Membership Figures**

Percent

	1976	1981	1982
Tuscany	256,377	245,914	241,714
Emilia Romagna	447,062	442,448	
Florence	71,668		63,000
Bologna	116,228	112,000	110,216

*The PCI.* In 1982, the Italian Communists claimed 1,673,751 members, more than any other Italian party except the Christian Democrats, but a drop of 40,000 since the previous year. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] PCI leaders believed that it was especially hard to attract new members in the north; membership figures from the "red belt," the traditional PCI heartland in Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, and Umbria, bear this out. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] party leaders were especially concerned about recruiting younger members. The respected non-Communist paper *La Stampa* reported in 1983 that the party is "middle-aged," its typical member at that time being a 40-year-old male. The US Consul in Trieste reported in February 1983 that many younger members felt that the leadership had lost touch with them. [REDACTED]

The US Embassy in Rome reported last February that the PCI-affiliated youth federation—consisting of supporters under 35—shrank from 400,000 members in the 1950s to 46,000 at the time of its recent congress. The party, in response, reportedly is permitting the federation greater autonomy. This tactic, however, has had some embarrassing results; federation members voted at its congress to pull Italy out of NATO, a position at odds with the PCI's support for Italian membership in the Alliance. [REDACTED]

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**The PCF.** The French Communist Party numbered between 300,000 and 350,000 in the 1960s. It claimed 700,000 in 1978, and PCF leaders claim that the party is holding its own. At the party congress in February 1985, however, they stated that membership is just over 600,000. We believe all these claims are inflated and mask a significant decline in membership. Well-informed journalists and political observers estimated early this year that membership had fallen to between 200,000 and 250,000. [redacted]

**The PCE.** PCE membership is disintegrating along with the party's electoral support. The party had perhaps 200,000 members, according to the most reputable estimates, when it became legal after Franco's demise. Spanish Communist officials claimed 160,000 members in 1981, but admitted to losing half of them by 1983. The party currently claims 62,000 members. [redacted]

We believe that one cause of the decline is the power struggle between Carrillo and Iglesias. Another cause is the creation of the new pro-Soviet Communist Party of the People of Spain. The Czechoslovak paper *Mlada Fronta* claimed in 1984 that the pro-Soviet party had 50,000 members, a figure almost certainly exaggerated. The PCE has more organizational experience, but the new party, given its Soviet ties, probably is better financed. [redacted]

#### **Decline in Communist Trade Union Support**

In countries where Communist parties have adopted Eurocommunism, the Communists are also losing support in the trade union movement. Membership in Italian unions as a whole has declined since the 1970s, but, while the largely Communist CGIL—the largest Italian trade union federation—lost 320,000 workers (9.6 percent) between 1977 and 1982, the Socialist and Republican-leaning UIL increased its membership by 125,000 during the same period. Academic and press commentators believe that the UIL's growth results directly from its adjustment to the needs of service employees. [redacted]

[redacted] Communist workers were dissatisfied with what they saw as PCI willingness to sacrifice negotiating positions for the sake of deals with other parties—an issue that arises directly from the Eurocommunists' efforts to play the democratic

**Table 3**  
**Spanish Worker Labor Affiliation**

Percent

	1978	1982
CC.OO	34.4	33.4
UGT	21.7	36.7

game. [redacted]  
similar complaints from members of the CGIL-affiliated metalworkers' union. [redacted]

Similar problems exist in France and Spain. PCF officials in 1981 admitted publicly that the Communist-affiliated labor federation, the CGT, lost 400,000 workers from 1977 to 1980—some 40 percent of its membership—and they have acknowledged further losses since. The Communist-affiliated Spanish labor councils (CC.OO) lost their traditional position as Spain's most popular labor organization when the Socialist-affiliated UGT beat them in the 1982 national labor elections. The US Embassy in Madrid reported in 1984 that the councils have tried to establish greater independence from PCE positions in order to defend their credibility with the workers. Despite these efforts, we judge that many Spanish workers still believe the councils are subservient to PCE dictates, particularly in contrast to the independence the UGT has demonstrated from Socialist government policy. Once again a major contradiction—in this case the conflict between support for democracy in the national context and an insistence on democratic centralism internally—has come to haunt a Eurocommunist party. [redacted]

#### **Reasons for the Decline**

These statistics measure the decline and also help cause it; they advertise the troubles of Eurocommunist parties to electoral constituencies and thus precipitate further decline. But the causes include other

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factors that, in our judgment, underscore the chronic nature of the Eurocommunist retreat. An important cause of the Eurocommunist parties' decline has been the ability of other political parties—especially the Socialists—to adjust to demographic change and satisfy the economic interests of leftwing voters better than their Communist rivals. In addition, feminists and ecologists have siphoned off supporters more concerned with specific issues than with millennial Marxism. Eurocommunism provides no guidance on issues such as these. Finally, we believe that the changing international political environment has seriously damaged the prospects of West European Communists. [redacted]

#### Competition With the Socialists

West European press and academic commentators argue that failure to compete successfully with Socialist rivals has been a major reason for the decline of Eurocommunist parties. According to these views, the Socialists have well-established democratic credentials whereas West European voters tend to identify even Eurocommunist parties with Soviet repression. We believe that, while ideologists clearly distinguished between Eurocommunism and Stalinism, they never did so between Eurocommunism and social democracy. Socialists in France and Spain have surpassed their Communist rivals in votes, power, and membership. While Berlinguer and Carrillo have departed the scene and Marchais has (in our view) proved his incompetence, Socialists Bettino Craxi, Felipe Gonzalez, and Francois Mitterrand have risen to the highest political offices in their countries and have skillfully maneuvered against their Communist counterparts. [redacted]

The Socialists did not just rely on their credentials, in our view. They also adopted policies that won votes:

- The Socialists have consistently based their political strategies on appeals aimed at satisfying workers' economic demands. The Eurocommunist decline of the early 1980s coincided with economic prosperity in Western Europe—and with the coming to power in Latin Europe of Socialist governments claiming credit for that prosperity. On the other hand, recent economic problems, while redounding against the

Socialists, have helped conservative opposition parties rather than the Communists—especially in France, where PCF cabinet ministers shared responsibility for the Mitterrand government's policies until June 1984.

- We believe that a major factor in successful Socialist trade union competition with the Eurocommunists was the Socialists' skill at adapting to changes in the character of the West European work force. According to OECD figures for Italy, France, and Spain, the blue-collar work force—the traditional constituency of the left—is declining relative to the service sector (reflected “as other” in Table 4 on page 8).<sup>1</sup> [redacted]

#### Greens and Feminists

In our judgment, Eurocommunist parties face competition from ecologists, feminists, and other non-sectarian leftists who may attract more young West Europeans than the Marxists—whether hardline or Eurocommunist. Officials in virtually all Communist parties have publicly expressed concern that youths are attracted more to Green movements than to Communism. We believe that this clash of ideological priorities is an enduring source of conflict in the West European left. [redacted]

The problem so far has manifested itself more in northern Europe, where the Greens have made their major gains, than in Italy, France, or Spain. For example, the Belgian and Dutch parties—already rent by hardline/Eurocommunist splits—are also being torn by debates over the relative importance of traditional class struggle themes and rival feminist and environmentalist strategies. Even in Italy, however, the Greens for the first time exceeded 1 percent of the vote in the recent regional elections, a gain that we believe came at the expense of the PCI. Voters in Florence elected two Green city councilmen. [redacted]

<sup>1</sup> The service sector has also grown over the last decade in Portugal and Greece, where orthodox Communist parties flourish, but this growth has been much less rapid; these states still possess large agricultural populations capable of feeding growth in both industry and services. We believe that this advantageous demographic climate better explains Communist strength in these two countries than the hardliners' claim that orthodoxy preserves a strong Communist party. [redacted]

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**Table 4**  
**Employment by Sector**

Percent

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<b>France</b>											
Agriculture	13.1	12.2	11.4	10.6	10.2	9.8	9.4	9.1	8.9	8.7	8.6
Industry	39.7	39.6	39.6	39.7	38.7	38.1	37.6	36.9	36.3	36.0	35.3
Other	47.2	48.1	48.7	49.8	51.1	52.1	53.0	54.0	54.7	55.3	56.2
<b>Italy</b>											
Agriculture	20.2	19.0	18.3	17.5	16.7	16.4	15.8	15.4	14.9	14.2	13.4
Industry	39.7	39.6	39.2	39.2	39.1	38.3	38.4	38.1	37.7	37.8	37.5
Other	40.1	41.4	42.5	43.2	44.2	45.2	45.8	46.5	47.4	47.9	49.1
<b>Spain</b>											
Agriculture	26.0	25.4	24.1	23.0	21.9	21.4	20.5	20.0	19.4	18.9	18.2
Industry	35.7	36.4	36.8	37.2	38.4	37.3	37.7	37.4	36.4	36.1	35.2
Other	38.3	38.2	39.1	39.8	39.8	41.3	41.8	42.6	44.2	45.1	46.6
<b>Portugal</b>											
Agriculture	29.4	28.3	27.2	34.8	33.9	33.9	32.9	31.3	30.5	28.8	26.7
Industry	33.4	34.0	34.6	34.5	34.0	33.5	33.1	34.8	35.0	36.0	37.5
Other	37.3	37.7	38.2	30.7	32.2	32.6	34.0	33.9	34.4	35.5	36.8
<b>Greece</b>											
Agriculture	38.9	37.9	36.8	36.0	35.2	34.2	33.2	32.0	30.8	30.3	30.7
Industry	26.3	26.8	27.6	27.8	27.9	28.7	29.2	29.7	30.0	30.2	29.0
Other	34.8	35.3	35.6	36.2	36.8	37.1	37.5	38.2	39.2	39.5	40.3

### The Importance of Detente

We believe that the Eurocommunists flourished in the 1970s partly because East-West detente, by dulling the notion of a Soviet threat, softened the public image of all Communists and helped make voting for them a credible democratic option. In our view, declining public concern with the Soviet threat led to a growing belief that both superpowers were morally equivalent (and equally dangerous); an impression that melded well with Eurocommunist arguments that Europeans needed to throw off the domination of both superpowers. [redacted]

If the onset of detente facilitated the Eurocommunist appeal, frostier East-West relations reversed this momentum. In our judgment, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reinvigorated public concerns over Soviet

brutality that had virtually disappeared after the US-Soviet arms control agreements of the early 1970s. Although Eurocommunists stressed their independence from Moscow and at times strongly attacked Soviet foreign policies, we believe that West European publics tarred local Communists with the Soviet brush.<sup>2</sup> [redacted]

<sup>2</sup> It is not clear that improved relations between Washington and Moscow would revive the West European Communists' popularity. Moscow's effort to improve relations with Socialist parties raises the possibility that the latter could at the same time claim to be more independent than their Communist rivals and take credit for relaxed East-West relations. [redacted]

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### International Policies

The parties identified with Eurocommunism have steadily diverged in their external policies since the heyday of the concept. In the 1970s they made a show of solidarity with each other. The solidarity never went very deep, and it has long since evaporated. The PCI continues its contact with West European Socialist parties and its relatively evenhanded criticism of both superpowers the basis of its international policies. The PCF, by contrast, shuns ties with non-Communist parties and trumpets its loyalty to Moscow. The PCE is too deeply embroiled with internal troubles to pay much attention to outside issues. For all the parties, the issue of their ties to the USSR poses tactical dilemmas which appear to have no easy answer. [REDACTED]

### PCI and PCF Divergences

PCI foreign policy has been complicated by doubts that Natta has the skill to earn the international prestige of Enrico Berlinguer, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We believe that Natta, aware of this problem, is trying to drape himself in the Eurocommunist mantle. He is pushing his predecessor's "Third Path" idea: the notion that Europeans, East and West, should assert their interests when necessary against the superpowers. [REDACTED]

Natta is pressing for improved relations with Socialists rather than with weakened Eurocommunists in other West European countries. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The US Embassy in Rome has reported that Natta is attempting to resurrect a dialogue on security policy with the West German Social Democrats that had lapsed since the 1970s. [REDACTED]

As PCI and PCF policies diverged, expressions of mutual contempt became the order of the day. In June 1984, the PCF newspaper *L'Humanite* attributed PCI electoral strength to "a society in a state of political, cultural, and moral decomposition." *L'Unita*

termed this insult "stupefying." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] PCI delegates nearly walked out of the recent PCF congress because of perceived insults from their hosts. [REDACTED]

Nevertheless, a degree of solidarity still exists over one issue: the right of local Communists to organize and legitimize national parties. Both the PCI and the PCF have tried to help their Spanish comrades fend off a challenge by the newly created pro-Soviet party, in our judgment because both think the PCE's collapse would be harmful to themselves. Marchais, for example, met with PCE Secretary-General Iglesias in March 1984, and refused to join the Warsaw Pact and Greek Communist parties in supporting the new party. [REDACTED]

These concerns are not unique to parties that have been identified with Eurocommunism. Even the Portuguese Communists appear uneasy with Moscow's encouragement of the hardline revolt against the PCE. [REDACTED] PCP officials, while opposed to the PCE's Eurocommunist line, recognize it as the only legitimate Spanish Communist party. PCP officials reportedly are trying to arrange long-delayed meetings between Iglesias and high-level Soviet leaders. [REDACTED]

### Relations With Moscow: A Continuing Dilemma

In our view, the question of their relations with the USSR pose particularly difficult questions for Eurocommunist parties because of the priority they place

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### **The Stalinist Alternative**

*Not every West European Communist party embraced Eurocommunism in the 1970s or prides itself on being independent from Moscow. There are two basic kinds of pro-Soviet Communist parties in Western Europe:*

- *Small parties such as the West German and Austrian, which have no pretense to electoral strength but serve as a conduit for Soviet information and funds going to groups inside their countries and other Communists elsewhere in Europe.*
- *Larger parties, typified by the Portuguese and Greek Communists, which seek to maximize votes but retain their commitment to radical activity.*

#### **Membership and Voting Strength**

*The Greek and Portuguese parties (KKE/EXT and PCP), in sharp contrast with most Eurocommunists, have held on to their voting shares and increased their membership. The PCP won 16.7 percent of the 1980 parliamentary vote and 18.2 percent in 1983. It claimed to have 187,000 members in 1982; according to the Spanish daily La Vanguardia, party membership rose from 115,000 in 1976 to 200,000 in 1983.*

*[redacted] a recent recruiting drive may have added another 10,000 members to the rolls. On the other hand, [redacted] the PCP is having trouble attracting youth. Ninety percent of the new members reportedly are over 40.*

*The KKE/EXT—despite its relatively poor showing in the June election—has a stable 10 percent of the vote and is the third largest party in Greece.*

#### **Political Milieu**

**Portugal.** *The PCP was deeply involved in an effort to seize power in 1974-75, and we believe it still hopes to undermine the democratic process. According to numerous press and diplomatic sources, Portuguese Communists spend much time trying to subvert the Socialists. We believe that they are hopeful that a new party supporting President Eanes will steal votes from the democratic left and enter a dialogue with the Communists. PCP leaders, nevertheless, reportedly also recognize that the new party might take some votes from them.*

*We believe that the PCP's main problem is the succession to Alvaro Cunhal, 71, a venerable Stalinist who spent 13 years in prison and 14 in exile before 1974.*

*[redacted] younger leaders are less concerned than Cunhal with aping Soviet policies and more inclined to serve local constituencies. Nevertheless, we doubt that Cunhal's successors will reduce the party's reliance on Moscow.*

**Greece.** *The KKE/EXT is in a more ambiguous position. While the PCP has a clear target in the anti-Soviet Mario Soares, the Greek Communists must deal with Andreas Papandreou, whose PASOK government pleases Moscow with its anti-US posturing. Communist leaders often find themselves restrained*

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*from attacking Prime Minister Papandreou by Soviet leaders satisfied that the current government serves Soviet interests.* [redacted]

[redacted] *KKE leaders have sharpened their criticism of Papandreou in the wake of PASOK's victory in the recent election.* [redacted]

#### **The Labor Front**

*The PCP's pro-Soviet image hurts its prospects with Portuguese labor, especially white collar employees. According to the US Embassy in Lisbon, most workers view the Communist-affiliated CGTP as subservient to Communist (and therefore Soviet) direction. By contrast, the larger, Socialist-affiliated UGT reportedly has a reputation for independence. In 1982, workers ignored a CGTP call for a general strike.* [redacted]

*KKE/EXT labor policy is constrained by Soviet support for the PASOK government, but the party nonetheless maintains active competition for control over the labor movement. The US Consul in Thessaloniki reported in February that labor there was "essentially at the beck of the KKE."* [redacted]

on winning non-Communist votes. Polls confirm that non-Communist voters have a generally negative view of the Soviet Union. Many voters were willing to give Moscow the benefit of the doubt in the seventies, but far fewer do so since the invasion of Afghanistan. The immobility of Soviet domestic policies may also have hurt recruiting efforts among younger constituents. We believe the comments of Marcel Rigout, a leading PCF reformer, accurately state the problem: "For young people we are not the party of human rights and we are not the party of democratic socialism. We are the party of the gulag and Afghanistan." [redacted]

But the tactics that show the most promise with non-Communists, such as sharp criticism of Moscow, risk confusing and offending the party rank and file. In particular, we believe the ups and downs in Soviet-PCI relations over the last three or four years are due partly to a PCI fear of a rank-and-file backlash. [redacted]

#### **Soviet-PCI Bad Blood**

The low point in the PCI's relations with Moscow came in the wake of the Polish crisis, when the PCI firmly supported Solidarity as a "Eurocommunist" experiment. In 1981 Berlinguer publicly compared the Russian and French revolutions, asserting that both had run their course. In July 1982, in response to strong *Pravda* attacks, PCI leaders declared that the Soviet model had exhausted itself and spoke openly of a schism in party-to-party relations. [redacted]

Polemics cooled by the fall, however. We believe that PCI leaders, in the final analysis, saw little value in a formal split and feared that pro-Soviet PCI leader Armando Cossutta could mobilize significant rank-and-file opposition to a break with Moscow. Indeed, according to press accounts, the party leadership had difficulty explaining its hostile attitude toward Soviet policy to the rank and file. In March 1982 the US Consul in Trieste reported that Cossutta had local support for his criticism of the PCI line. In June the US Embassy reported that 10 percent of the Lazio PCI federation had abstained in a vote on that line out of residual loyalty to the USSR. In July the Liguria federation rejected the party line. [redacted]

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### *The Finnish Communist Party*

*Demoralization has led to polemics in smaller parties; the Finnish, Dutch, Belgian, and British parties are splitting along Eurocommunist/orthodox lines. The Finnish situation is perhaps the most interesting of these because of the special relationship between the Soviet Union and Finland. The Finnish Communist Party (SKP) has been polarized between Eurocommunist and pro-Soviet factions since the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Because the Eurocommunists control nine district organizations (compared with eight for the Stalinists) they call themselves the "majority."* [redacted]

*A formal split has appeared imminent since the SKP's 1984 congress, when Eurocommunist Aarvo Aalto became party chairman by a 186-to-163 Central Committee vote. He has moved aggressively since then to force the Stalinists to choose between coming to heel or leaving the party. Aalto has even purged his predecessor—the leader of a "Third Path" group trying to mediate the dispute—from the Central Committee.* [redacted]

*[redacted] the Stalinists and "Third Path" advocates have since combined against Aalto.* [redacted]

*After the 1984 congress, the Stalinists demanded convocation of a special "unity" congress to reconsider the leadership issue. We believe the Stalinists hoped Moscow would intervene to bring down Aalto. Initially, the Soviets tried. A barrage by Pravda against Aalto was followed by a visit to Finland in October by a delegation led by Politburo member and erstwhile Leningrad boss Romanov. The US Embassy in Helsinki reported that Romanov's letter to the SKP leadership supported the Stalinists' call for a congress and warned that Aalto's purge could affect overall Fenno-Soviet relations.* [redacted]

*Aalto responded by accelerating his attacks on the minority. He accepted the idea of a special congress but insisted that the same delegates attend it as attended in 1984, thus assuring the continuation of his line. In December he announced, to Pravda's*

*displeasure, that his group was forming rival organizations in the eight districts controlled by the Stalinists. To no avail, the Stalinists withdrew their call for a meeting and subsequently declared that they would not attend one. When the congress met last March, Aalto refrained from expelling the Stalinists, but changed party rules to allow his Central Committee to expel district organizations and to make it more difficult for the minority to call for future meetings.* [redacted]

*While the Eurocommunists are moving carefully to avoid provoking Moscow, we judge that a formal party split is virtually inevitable.* [redacted]

*[redacted] Finnish press reports suggest that he will not permit them to renew their party cards this fall. Aalto and Esko Vainionpaa, the new General Secretary, have publicly promised to solve the problem by 1987.* [redacted]

*Moscow, for its part, is reacting cautiously. Pravda attacked Aalto's policies on 15 March and again on 2 April, but according to the US Embassy in Helsinki, the tone was less shrill than last year. The Embassy reported that the Soviets held meetings in Moscow with representatives of all three party factions around the time of the March congress. In the Embassy's view, the Soviets now are treating the formal split pragmatically; nevertheless, Moscow recently has put some economic pressure on Aalto to accommodate the Stalinists.* [redacted]

*There is some evidence suggesting that the public fighting is hurting the SKP's electoral support. Polls, for example, indicate that the coalition through which the SKP receives support currently would receive 11.8 percent of the vote, compared with 14 percent in the 1983 election. In addition, [redacted] the party is having trouble recruiting new members, especially among youths.* [redacted]

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*Berlinguer, Marchais, and Carrillo in happier days (1977)*



Moreover, the PCI's anti-Soviet position on Poland apparently did not improve the party's public image. According to a poll in the weekly *Panorama* in 1982, 20.9 percent of the respondents had more confidence in the PCI following that confrontation, but 20.1 percent had less. Half believed that the PCI remained a "traditional" Communist party. [redacted]

We think these factors help explain why Italian Communist leaders carefully avoided polemics after the Soviets shot down the Korean airliner in September 1983—even though, [redacted] they received "buckets" of anti-Soviet mail. PCI spokesman called the act "indefensible," but gave equal time to Soviet claims of US responsibility. [redacted]

Most observers believe that the PCI's pro-Soviet faction represents at most 10 to 15 percent of the party leadership. We believe, however, that there is considerable latent pro-Soviet sentiment among the rank and file, and we think PCI leaders are wary of stimulating it. [redacted]

#### **The PCF: Choosing Moscow, Not Independence**

The PCF is the other side of this coin. In contrast to the PCI, PCF supporters are more inclined than their leaders to criticize the Soviet Union, and we think that the leadership's pro-Soviet policies have contributed significantly to the party's demoralization. Sofres polls in 1982 indicated that the proportion of PCF sympathizers with a positive view of the Soviet system had dropped from 62 to 35 percent over the previous 10 years. In addition, the US Embassy in Paris reported in January 1985 the results of a poll in which only 35 percent of the party's supporters had a "rather positive" view of the USSR, the same proportion had a "rather negative" view, and 30 percent had "no opinion." Over half had a negative view of Soviet "respect for public and individual liberties," and 45

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percent did not believe that Moscow respects the independence of "popular democracies."<sup>3</sup> [redacted]

Even the PCF, however, tries to limit the damage of its pro-Soviet policies by exhibiting independence on selected issues. As already noted, the PCF criticized Moscow's encouragement of the split in Spanish Communism. In addition:

- The PCF routinely criticizes Soviet treatment of Andre Sakharov, a cause celebre in France.
- Clumsy Soviet propaganda alleging French mistreatment of Breton and other "minorities" sparks PCF insistence that France is not a multiethnic society. [redacted]

Soviet disregard for PCF sensitivities contributes to occasional frictions. For example, the Soviet announcement in 1984 of the release of a French journalist captured in Afghanistan to a French Socialist member of parliament humiliated Marchais, according to press accounts, and reinforced perceptions that Moscow considers its relations with socialist governments more important than with fraternal Communist parties. [redacted]

We believe that the Soviets are generally satisfied with the PCF's international policies even though they relegate the party to the political margin. [redacted]

[redacted] Moscow does not expect the PCF to play an important role in French politics. [redacted]

#### Security Issues

We believe security issues such as INF and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) are Moscow's high-priority in the region. No Eurocommunist policies on security issues have been entirely satisfactory to Moscow, but the PCI again is unique in the degree of

<sup>3</sup> We believe that the party's loyalty to the Soviets is due not just to the strength of hardline leaders but also to the party's growing financial dependence on Moscow. A PCF dissident, in conversations with US officials, claimed in the fall of 1984 that PCF income from dues and other sources has declined along with party membership and votes. As a result, the party depends more on aid from Moscow and East European countries channeled through the CGT. [redacted]

its divergence. The party did oppose INF deployment verbally and did support some demonstrations, but we believe the Italian Communists pulled their punches on the issue, permitting the Italian Government to accept its allotment of cruise missiles with a minimum of domestic troubles. In August 1984, the newly installed Communist mayor of Comiso, Italy's cruise missile site, promised to maintain "correct" relations with the base. He did so until the fall of his government earlier this year. Embassy [redacted] sources have reported since 1979 that the Soviets have expressed displeasure to PCI leaders over the latter's INF policy. [redacted]

Similarly, the PCI has failed to give much backing to the Italian Peace Movement. Press and US Embassy reports have noted PCI efforts to maintain credibility and influence with "peace" activists by supporting some demonstrations, but [redacted] the PCI feared isolation from other Italian parties if it got too close. We believe that the Communists intended to maintain an image of moderation that would support the party's claims of loyalty toward the Italian role in Western security. [redacted]

We believe the party so far has established a similar position on SDI. Natta, in praising Gorbachev's initial speech as General Secretary, said he considered it "important" that Gorbachev had avoided polemics over "star wars." According to US Embassy reports, at least some PCI officials were fascinated with the US briefings on SDI last January, believing that Washington presented a cogent rationale for the program. *L'Unita*, in February and March, ran a relatively objective series on the issue, reportedly over the objection of foreign policy expert Giancarlo Pajetta, who considered one article to be a "slap in the face of the Soviets." The PCI has since criticized the SDI initiative, but so far has not launched any major propaganda or parliamentary campaigns designed to obstruct Italian participation in the program. [redacted]

The French Communists also started off by offering Moscow less than total support on INF, but they have followed the Soviet line for the past two years. They

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had the advantage of living in a country not facing a basing decision; on the other hand, they have had to deal with Moscow's persistent efforts to get the French nuclear deterrent included in the arms talks. During Mitterrand's first days in power, the PCF supported his refusal to let the French deterrent be considered in US-Soviet negotiations. On the other hand, public PCF statements encouraged West German Peace Movement activity and railed against NATO's INF policy. [REDACTED]

The party's public position on INF changed when Marchais went to Moscow in mid-1983 and adopted the Soviet line on inclusion of the French deterrent. Since then the PCF has followed the twists in Soviet policy. Party publicists moved effortlessly from support for the Soviet walkout from the INF talks in 1983 to support for new negotiations when Moscow decided to return to the table. The PCF has also come out forthrightly against SDI. We believe that it will try to exploit public and official fears that Washington's initiative will hurt European stability and make the French deterrent obsolete. [REDACTED]

The PCF so far has not adopted the Soviet line on nuclear testing. The US Embassy in Paris reported that Marchais, who backed virtually every other Soviet security initiative during his visit to Moscow in September, stopped short of calling on other countries to join Gorbachev's test moratorium. French commentators speculated that Marchais wanted to skirt the sensitive issue of French testing in the South Pacific. [REDACTED]

#### A Worldwide Communist Conference

In our view, the decline of Eurocommunism presents Moscow with a choice of either attempting to isolate the PCI by insisting on renewed West European Communist loyalty to Soviet policies, or improving relations with both Socialists and Communists by paying lipservice to their independence. We believe that evolving Soviet policies toward convening an international Communist party meeting indicate that Moscow preferred the former road during the Chernenko era, but may have chosen the latter since Gorbachev's accession. [REDACTED]

Most West European Communist parties, in our view, no longer oppose the principle of international Communist party conferences, should Moscow choose to press for them. Indeed, when the PCF called a meeting in Paris last June to discuss political cooperation within the European Community, delegates from 18 parties turned up (although the PCI and PCF could not agree on substantive matters). This contrasts sharply with a regional party meeting hosted by Marchais on security in 1980; then the PCI, the PCE, several smaller West European parties, and the Romanian and Yugoslav parties embarrassed the PCF by refusing to attend. [REDACTED]

In our judgment, this change encouraged the Soviets during Chernenko's last months to drum up support for the first worldwide Communist conclave in decades.<sup>4</sup> Moscow encountered opposition from the PCI however—an indication that the Italians were far from giving the Soviets carte blanche. [REDACTED]

Since Gorbachev's accession the Soviets have dropped their public calls for international Communist meetings and have increased their favorable comment on Soviet ties to West European Socialists. We believe Gorbachev may recognize that past international Communist meetings have generally become platforms for dissent rather than for solidarity. PCI Directorate member Gianni Cervetti, who discussed his meeting with Gorbachev in a 22 May *L'Unita* interview, expressed the view that Moscow now considers calls for a global conference "untimely." Should this reflect a change in Soviet policy, we believe that it could—by relieving PCI concerns about a Communist meeting and supporting its interest in better relations with West European socialists—be a concrete step toward better Soviet-PCI relations. [REDACTED]

<sup>4</sup> The last "worldwide" meeting occurred in 1969, but the Chinese Communists were absent; the last meeting to include the Chinese took place in 1961. [REDACTED]

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### Gorbachev

We believe that West European Communists are pleased that a younger man finally has emerged to lead the Soviet Union. West European Communists reacted to Gorbachev's elevation in a hopeful, if cautious, manner (a sharp contrast to the coolness expressed when Chernenko succeeded Andropov). They probably hope Gorbachev will be more willing than his predecessors to treat with respect the ideas of Communists living in developed capitalist societies. *L'Humanite* on 13 March called Gorbachev's accession "an important development in the life of the Soviet Union." PCI spokesmen called it a "positive development," although they expressed doubts that Soviet-PCI relations would change right away. [redacted]

The recent end to calls for a worldwide Communist party meeting is one of several indications that Moscow is courting the PCI. [redacted]

[redacted] Gorbachev made a favorable impression on the PCI delegation to Chernenko's funeral. [redacted]

[redacted] Natta and Japanese Communist Presidium Chairman Fuwa (representing another party at odds with Moscow) were the only Communists from non-ruling parties who were granted a meeting with Gorbachev during the Chernenko funeral—a development that we believe humiliated the PCF. At Andropov's funeral, Chernenko did not meet any non-ruling Communists, while Andropov met only with Marchais at Brezhnev's funeral 15 months earlier. [redacted] the US Embassy in Moscow believe that Gorbachev's meeting the PCI and Japanese Communist leaders indicates Soviet interest in improving ties to these parties—the two most formidable forces among independent, non-ruling Communist parties. [redacted]

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Soviet-PCI relations still have a long way to go before they are cordial, however; we agree with the assessment of the US Embassy in Rome that they will not improve greatly in the short run even if Moscow is more forthcoming. In our view, the PCI's lukewarm opposition to US INF and SDI policies still irritate Moscow. In addition, on 1 August *L'Unita* reported that the PCI delegation to the recent international youth festival in Moscow had clashed publicly with their hosts over Soviet policy in Afghanistan. [ ]

### Outlook

Eurocommunism's central premise that Communist parties can improve their political position by playing the democratic game clearly has proven inadequate as a political strategy. It has not brought power, or an increased popular vote, or a more secure place in the political mainstream to the parties espousing it.<sup>5</sup> It has provided no guidance for coping with the demographic trends that are reducing traditional Communist constituencies, with the new political currents that are attracting young leftists, or with Socialist rivals who started with definite advantages in the traditional political arena and used them well. [ ]

Moreover, for most Eurocommunist parties, Eurocommunism was a concept they arrived at late, and the element of hypocrisy was all too apparent. The main exception in this regard is the PCI, the most successful of the West European parties and the one with the deepest roots in Eurocommunism. We believe the PCI will remain the one major party adhering to Eurocommunist concepts. PCI leaders will continue to criticize Soviet as well as US security policies as long as they believe Washington is willing to pursue arms control and suspect Moscow has military designs on Western Europe. They will also, we feel sure, try to

<sup>5</sup> The PCF did, of course, participate in government between 1981 and 1984, but in our view its participation owed little to Eurocommunism. To be sure, the party's accession probably would have been more difficult to bring off without the history of PCF-Socialist cooperation in the 1970s, and that same legacy made it all but impossible for the party to reject the idea after the left's electoral victories. But PCF policies had long since moved away from Eurocommunism in 1981, and its vote totals were already in steep decline, partly because its flip-flops on the Eurocommunism issue had disillusioned many potential supporters. [ ]

peddle the "third path" idea to West Europeans and perhaps to East Europeans—anyone looking for a European alternative to the superpowers. The Italians will emphasize their contacts with French, West German, and perhaps Spanish Socialists, and with East European governments; we think they will show an interest only in those West European Communist parties that retain a significant degree of independence from Moscow. [ ]

We also think that the concepts of Eurocommunism have left a legacy even in those parties that do not espouse it. Continuing ferment within the PCF, for example, is due not just to the insensitivity of the party's leaders but to the continuing strength of "Eurocommunist" ideas. We also find it noteworthy that neither the French nor the Portuguese Communists have gone along with Moscow's efforts to encourage a pro-Soviet rival to the PCE in Spain. Apparently there are limits to what even Moscow's allies in Western Europe consider permissible; in other words, the notion has taken root in Western Europe that Communist parties ought to be allowed a degree of independence. [ ]

In practical terms, however, the decline of Eurocommunism is unmistakable. In our view the decline has a mixed effect on US interests. On the positive side, the concept failed to provide its advocates with a way out of the political ghetto, and those parties that have returned to orthodoxy—and have grown more critical of the United States—have also become less influential. On the other hand, Eurocommunist criticism of the Soviet Union—which in our view has more credibility among West European leftists than pronouncements by the United States or West European governments—now is less vociferous and carries less weight. [ ]

### Implications for Relations With Moscow

The decline of Eurocommunism, in our view, presents Moscow with new opportunities to improve relations with West European Communist parties. We believe that because most West Europeans still link local Communists with the Soviet Union, certain Soviet

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policies could enhance even the Eurocommunists' electoral appeal. Some of the most effective policies, in our view, would have a "Eurocommunist" tinge:

- In the international sphere, less Soviet aggressiveness could give West European parties a boost; whereas new instances of Soviet brutality would almost certainly speed their decline. We think a critical aspect of this Soviet image would be further appearance of willingness to respect the local parties' independence.
- More imaginative Soviet domestic policies—particularly those giving the impression of greater flexibility in economic matters—would also improve Moscow's image in Western Europe as a whole and would be welcomed by Eurocommunists in particular. We think there would be no need for the Soviets to liberalize their human rights policies; one academic observer noted before Chernenko's death that East European dissidents feel abandoned by the Eurocommunists. Rather, the impression that Moscow is reforming its economy would be sufficient to tap the residual sympathy most Communists feel for the Soviet experience. In short, West European Communists applaud experimentation and would react favorably to the perception that the Soviet Union once more is a giant social and economic laboratory.

Even if the USSR took these actions, however, we think the Eurocommunists would be hard pressed to enhance their political standing significantly. Such an improvement, in our view, would require a combination of factors, all of them either difficult to achieve or not under the Communists' control; for example:

- A major economic setback in Western Europe, which would bring many protest votes to the Communists.
- A sophisticated Soviet propaganda offensive that convinced West Europeans as a whole that the Soviet Union was more deeply committed than Washington to arms control and disarmament.
- An end to factional squabbling within Communist party leaderships.
- Greater attention by the Communists themselves to environmental issues—a shift that would expose tensions between environmentalism and classic Marxist themes.

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